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## Teachers union rips City Hall's COVID-19 preparedness in new poll

By [Selim Algar](#)

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**More NYC school staffers getting vaccinated ahead of Monday deadline amid staffing concerns**

City teachers union leaders blasted Mayor Bill de Blasio's ability to keep schools safe amid the ongoing coronavirus crisis in a newly released survey.

A poll of roughly 1,200 United Federation of Teachers chapter leaders done at a meeting of union brass Wednesday revealed a nearly unanimous lack of confidence **in City Hall's stewardship of city schools.**

Asked if de Blasio has "any clue" what's happening inside classrooms, 98 percent of respondents answered in the negative.

An overwhelming 93 percent said kids were not complying with social distancing mandates throughout the day while 89 percent said students were not properly using masks.

Presided over by union chief Michael Mulgrew, roughly 200 chapter leaders attended the meeting in person while another 1,000 participated remotely.

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The meeting was presided over by Michael Mulgrew.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

Mulgrew reminded his members of de Blasio's approaching exit and said that his likely successor, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, should be made aware of union imperatives through organizing and activism.

The DOE pushed back on the questionnaire. "This is not an accurate survey," said spokesperson Danielle Filson. "Our hard-working staff and students are adhering to the multi-layered, CDC protocols to help keep each other safe, and we're grateful for their commitment and service."

Meanwhile, **unvaccinated city teachers now have just three days** to get their first shot or face removal from classrooms.

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De Blasio repeated Thursday that the city has vaccinated substitute teachers it can count on as replacements for teachers who remain unvaccinated.

Kevin C. Downs

Overall, the DOE said 78 percent of all 130,000 DOE staffers — including kitchen and custodial staff — have gotten the shot.

That leaves a balance of more than 28,000 employees who are still lacking the jab.

Any DOE worker who fails to get it by Monday must either take a year of unpaid leave with health coverage or exit the system with a severance package.

The city is offering religious and medical exemptions, but union sources said those accommodations have been minimal.

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Teachers now have just three more days to get their first shot or face being removed from their classrooms.

Dan Herrick

De Blasio said Thursday that only Christian Scientists and Jehovah's Witnesses have any prayer for a religious exemption based on their established opposition to vaccines.

He repeated Thursday that the city was ready to deploy a platoon of vaccinated substitute teachers to replace current staffers who fail to comply with the mandate.

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